

View of the historic Narrow Gauge Trail.

Perley Mills Project Progressing Rapidly

THE PERLEY MILLS COMMUNITY FOREST PROJECT HAS MADE REMARKABLE PROGRESS since it was first introduced to our members in January. The project goal is ambitious - protect 1,600 acres of land spanning three towns, two counties and two major watersheds within fourteen months time.

Loon Echo Land Trust is up for the challenge due to the array of public benefits that the forest offers; local municipal officials backed the project from the onset; and an anonymous family foundation pledged to donate a major gift directed towards this effort. All of these factors created a strong base for a regionally significant, and urgent, land protection project.

The purchase agreement with K&W Timberlands expires on December 31, resulting in pressure to raise the funds this year. As of June 1st over eighty percent of the total \$1.4 million budget (includes the purchase price, transaction expenses, and an endowment) has been secured from foundations, local families, and state and municipal funds (see www.lelt.org for a current list of major contributors).

The host towns of Denmark, Bridgton and Sebago are all playing important roles. Denmark's municipal leaders have a goal of owning the bulk of this forest on behalf of the public. Their eagerness to conserve a large working forest is transpiring into participation in fundraising and public education. Sebago will own the remaining 130 acres located on Swamp Road. On June 1st Denmark and Sebago held annual town meetings with warrant articles each requesting \$25,000 to the project.

"I was extremely gratified to see the strong support for the Perley Mills Community Forest shown by Denmark residents at our Town Meeting. A few questions concerning long term economics were raised, which were enthusiastically answered by other members

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Public benefits of the Perley Mills Community Forest project include protecting:

- three miles of the Narrow Gauge Trail, a significant section of the state ITS 89 snowmobile and regional ATV network;
- the water quality of Pickerel and Willett Ponds, Sucker and Willett Brooks, and hundreds of acres of wetlands;
- a large undeveloped working forest;
- permanent public access for snowmobiling, ATV'ing, hunting, fishing, trapping, boating, swimming, walking, hiking, bicycling, cross-country skiing, and horseback riding;
- the region's rural character, quality of life, and tourism and natural resource based economy.



LOON ECHO
LAND TRUST

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LOON ECHO NEWS

26TH LOON ECHO ANNUAL MEETING AND HACKER'S HILL CAMPAIGN CELEBRATION

LOON ECHO WILL HOLD OUR 26TH ANNUAL MEETING AND Hacker's Hill Campaign Celebration atop beautiful Hacker's Hill in Casco on Saturday, August 24. This year is a special one as we recognize 26 years as a vibrant regional organization committed to conserving land in the Lake Region of Maine and celebrate our newest preserve – Hacker's Hill. Members and campaign contributors will enjoy an evening of champagne and casual picnic style dinner while enjoying the beautiful views from this hilltop oasis. The night will begin at 5:00 pm, with a short presentation of annual accomplishments followed by election of the Board of Directors. At 5:30 pm the campaign celebration begins lasting 'til sunset. The picnic dinner will feature salads and sandwiches from the Good Life Market. Attendees should bring a lawn chair or blanket to enjoy the grassy fields. A suggested donation of \$25.00 per person is requested. Reserve your spot by sending in your donation with names of attendees and meat or vegetarian choice by August 15 to Loon Echo Land Trust, 8 Depot St., Ste 4, Bridgton, ME 04009.

For more information please contact us at 207-647-4352 or info@lelt.org.



Executive Director, Carrie Walia, with her son Grayden atop Hacker's Hill in May.



Kevin Hancock of Hancock Land Company signing the option agreement on top of Hacker's Hill for the Raymond land. (see article page 8.)



Thank You!

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our members for your support. It is these membership dollars that make our efforts in land conservation come to fruition. Your involvement is greatly appreciated.

FAREWELL TO UNCLE AL

LOON ECHO BIDS A FOND FAREWELL TO BRIDGTON resident and Winona Camps owner Al Ordway who passed on April 24, 2013. Al was a mentor and "second father" to countless young men who attended Winona and was very involved in the summer camps industry and culture. Al and Michelle donated 160 acres on Pleasant Mountain to Loon Echo in 2004. Al was a long time supporter and friend to Loon Echo and will be greatly missed.

STAFF

Executive Director

Carrie Walia, carrie@lelt.org

Stewardship & Volunteer Coordinator

Jon Evans, jon@lelt.org

Membership &

Communications Coordinator

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Event Manager, Carol Meader, trek@lelt.org

Cartographer, Pam Edwards, mapping@lelt.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Karen Eller, *President*

Brian Dillon, *Vice President*

Robert Gowdy, *Treasurer*

Connie Cross

Eric Dibner

Edward Friedman

Allen Erler

Jerry Holt

David Hursty

Michael McSally

Norm Nicholson

Carol Sudduth

John Thomas



8 Depot St., Ste 4
Bridgton, Maine 04009
207-647-4352
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PROJECT UPDATES



JON EVANS

Thank you to long-time supporter and volunteer, Brian Grady, for the beautifully constructed informational kiosk and donation tube now installed at Hacker's Hill.

HACKER'S HILL - UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT!

LOON ECHO CLOSED ON THIS "SANCTUARY IN THE SKY" IN July of 2012 and has since developed a management and best use plan. For those of you who are familiar with the property you won't feel as if much has changed. Loon Echo adopted many of the existing practices and is working with former owner, Conrad Hall, and long time care taker, Don Fowler.

The hours of operation remain the same as in past years: the gate opened on May 1st and will close on October 31st. The gate will continue to be closed on Tuesday, Thursday, July 4th and any inclement weather days to allow for mowing and maintenance activities. Foot traffic is welcome during the day time hours when the gate is closed. The traditional public uses such as picnicking, scenic viewing, dog walking, kite flying and snowmobiling remain, as it was important to Loon Echo and the Town of Casco to retain such uses that have been enjoyed for decades.

Some new features you may notice are an improved informational kiosk featuring use guidelines, upcoming

events and property brochures. There is also the addition of the iron ranger for those of you so moved to make a donation to aide in the maintenance and stewardship of this beautiful parcel.

A carry in carry out practice has been implemented to relieve Loon Echo of the trash removal and an event policy has been introduced to keep up with the many dates people reserve for weddings or family gatherings.

As of June 1st we currently have \$60,000 left to raise prior to July of 2013 to pay off the one year bridge loan and to fund a perpetual endowment to maintain the property to its current standard of excellence.

We will be holding several events atop the hill throughout the summer including the Hacker's Hill Climb, Acoustic Sunset and our 26th Annual Meeting and Hacker's Hill Campaign Celebration.

Contributions are encouraged to help complete this project. Gifts of any amount can be sent to Loon Echo Land Trust, 8 Depot Street, Suite 4, Bridgton, Maine 04009 and indicate the gift is intended for "Hacker's Hill." Keep abreast of the project's progress by visiting www.loonecholandtrust.org. If you have not yet made it to the top of this special hill then make it a priority for this summer or fall – the gate remains open through October.

Do you love Loon Echo Land Trust and want to shout it to the world?



We now carry t-shirts, polos and fleece vests that display the new logo. Whether you are out hiking one of our beautiful preserves or out and about in town you can represent your favorite regional conservation organization in style.

- T-shirts - \$12.00
- Polos - \$25.00
- Fleece Vests - \$35.00

You can order apparel on-line at www.loonecholandtrust.org or call the office at 207-647-4352.

JUNE- DECEMBER 2013 EVENT CALENDAR

All outdoor events are subject to weather conditions and/or date changes. Please check our website for updates and additional activities at www.lelt.org. Always wear appropriate clothing and footwear for the weather conditions and varied terrain, for winter programming there are a small number of snowshoes available upon request. Bring water and snacks with you. Call (207) 647-4352 for more information.



Summer Solstice Hike at Bald Pate Mountain

June 21, 5:00 p.m.

Celebrate the first day of summer with a moderate hike up Bald Pate Mountain and also remember Bob Chase, one of Loon Echo's founders, who loved the mountain and its views of the surrounding ponds and lakes. There is a 300' elevation gain from the main parking lot, making Bald Pate a family friendly destination. *Moderate*. Meet at the Bald Pate parking lot on Rt. 107 at 5:00 pm. *Approx 2 hours*.

Loon Echo Open House

June 25, 3:00-5:00 p.m.

Loon Echo will host an afternoon open house from 3:00-5:00 p.m. where we will be highlighting current land campaigns and conservation priorities for the region. Light refreshments will be served and staff and board members will be on hand to answer any questions you may have. Of course visitors are always welcome during regular office hours of 8:30 am-4:30 pm Monday - Thursday.

An Evening of Astronomy at Hacker's Hill

July 13, 7:00 p.m.
(Rain date - July 15)

Raymond and Casco Public Libraries will host an evening

of astronomy atop Hacker's Hill. Sponsored by Loon Echo, participants will have an opportunity to get expert advice on the night sky and view constellations through one of the three telescopes that will be on site. Attendees should meet at the Casco Public Library at 7:00 p.m. for a presentation by Dave Manchester from the Southern Maine Astronomer's Guild the group will then head to Hacker's Hill. *Easy*.

Crooked River Community Forests

July 24, 7:00 p.m.

Bolsters Mills Masonic Hall, Bolsters Mills, Harrison Join Loon Echo Land Trust and Western Foothills Land Trust as they host a talk on the benefits of community forests and share exciting opportunities for such forests on the Crooked River in Harrison and Otisfield. Julie Renaud Evans, director of Sustainable Forest Futures and a leader in the Community Forest Collaborative, will give examples of the multiple community forests in northern New England totaling more than 8,000 acres. Community Forests provide a unique model for local forest ownership that generates economic and social benefits for the community, while at the same time accomplishing land conservation. Drinks and dessert will be served.

Trail Maintenance at Pleasant Mountain

July 27, 7:45 a.m.

Loon Echo staff and volunteers along with the Maine Chapter AMC will tackle trail maintenance on the popular Ledges Trail at Pleasant Mountain. Proper work clothing, shoes, snacks and water required. Training and tools available, approximately 5 hours. *Serenuous*. Meet at the Ledges Trail on Mountain Road.



History Walk Along the Narrow Gauge

August 16, 9:00 a.m.

Take a walk back in time along the old Narrow Gauge rail bed at the Perley Mills Community Forest, hosted by Loon Echo and the Denmark Conservation Commission. Learn about the little trains that chugged their way from Hiram to Harrison at the turn of the last century. Bring your camera, water and proper shoes. Walk will cover 2 miles, approximately 2 hours. *Moderate*. Come learn more about this exciting regional project! Meet at the trail head at the intersection of Hancock Pond and Swamp Roads in Sebago.

26th Loon Echo Annual Meeting and Hacker's Hill Campaign Celebration

August 24, 5:00 p.m.

See page 2.

Acoustic Sunset at Hacker's Hill

July 31, 7:00 p.m.
(Rain date - August 1)

Folk musician Andre Villoch will perform a one hour set of acoustic music on top of Hacker's Hill while the sun sets beyond the White Mountains. There is a \$10 per person (\$5 for children) suggested donation at the "door" to benefit the Hacker's Hill Campaign. Bring a picnic and a lawn chair. *Music begins at 7:00p.m.*



Hacker's Hill Climb

August 8, 5:30 p.m.

Loon Echo will host a Hacker's Hill 4 mile run and walk on the evening of Thursday, August 8. The course will have runners and walkers striding uphill on Quaker Ridge Road finally ending atop Hacker's Hill with stunning views of the mountains and lakes. The cost to runners and walkers is \$20/adult \$15/children and youth. Registration starts at 5:30 p.m. and runners will take off at 6:30 p.m. with walkers to follow. All proceeds from this event will go to the protection and stewardship of Hacker's Hill. For more information on this event visit www.loonecholandtrust.org or email trek@lelt.org.



Hawk Migration at Hacker's Hill

September 7, 9:00 a.m.
(Rain date September 8)

Hawk Migration count at Hacker's Hill in Casco. Former Maine Audubon Director Richard Anderson will provide guests with information about the southern migration of Hawks and identification. Bring a comfortable chair, binoculars, snacks and water. Approximately 3 hours. *Easy*.

Kites Over Hacker's Hill

September 14, 10:00 a.m.

Kite flying at Hacker's Hill Preserve. Alternative program in case of no wind. Bring a lawn chair, water and picnic lunch. *Approximately 2 hours. Easy.*

2013 Loon Echo Trek

September 21 - Shawnee Peak Ski Area, Bridgton

See page 7.



JON EVANS

The full moon as viewed by participants of the ever popular Sunset/Moonrise Hike.

Fall Foliage Hike at Bald Pate Mountain

October 12, 9:00 a.m.

Explore the South Face Loop and Pate Trail at Bald Pate Mountain Preserve. Scramble up over the rocks to the "Pate" and take in commanding views of area lakes and ponds in the Sebago Lake area. Proper hiking boots, clothing and water required. Approximately 3 hours. *Strenuous*. Meet at the Micah trail head on Moose Cove/Camp Micah Road in Sebago.

Sunset/Moonrise Hike at Bald Pate Mountain

November 17, 3:15 p.m.

Back by popular demand! Hike to the summit of Bald Pate Mountain to catch the sunset at 4:15 p.m. and full moonrise at 4:29 p.m. Conditions permitting, guests will watch the sun dip behind the Boston Hills beyond Hancock Pond. Moments later, the full moon will rise in the east. Approximately 2 hours. *Moderate*. Meet at the parking lot on Rt. 107.

Loon Echo Preserves Slide Show

November 22, 5:00 p.m.

Narrated, digital tour of Loon Echo preserves. Come take a look at what you have helped preserve in the northern Sebago Lake region! Hosted by Loon Echo staff member and photographer, Jon Evans. Event will be held at the fully accessible Loon Echo office; light refreshments will be served.

Winter Hike at Pleasant Mountain

December 28, 8:45 a.m.

Climb the Bald Peak Trail to the Big Bald Peak and then visit the Red Pine Woodland on the North Peak, conditions permitting. Conditions may require microspikes, snowshoes and hiking poles. *Strenuous*. Meet at the Bald Peak trail head.

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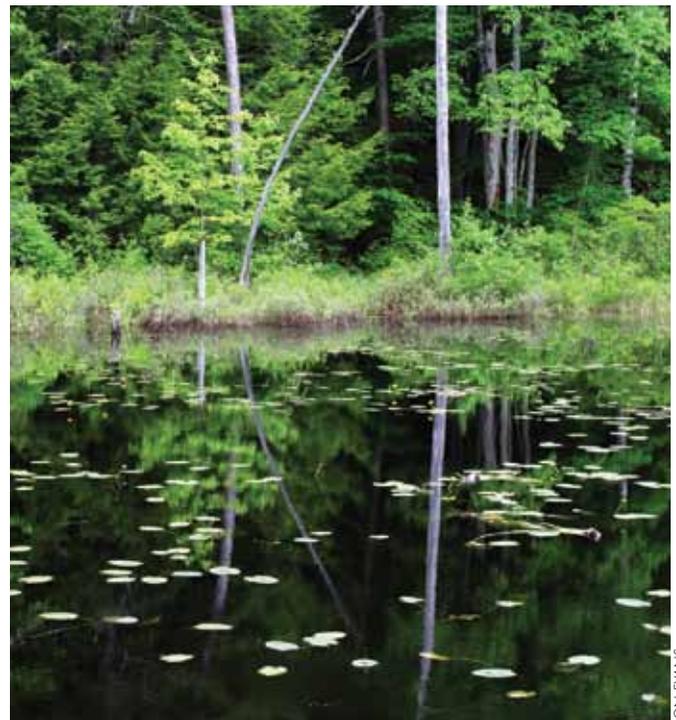
of the community, not necessarily members of the Conservation Commission. The vote was just short of unanimous to allow the Selectmen to release funding to the project," stated Commission Chair, Terry Rhoads.

Loon Echo Director and Sebago resident, Jerry Holt, summarized their Town Meeting by saying, "The voters approved the purchase of the Sebago portion of the Perley Mills Project. A healthy discussion ensued prior to the vote and the tally was significantly in favor of it."

When the project is completed, the two towns will own and manage the 1,600 acre regional property for public recreation, natural resource protection, and selective timber harvesting to offset any loss in property taxes. The land will be permanently protected by a conservation easement held by Loon Echo.

Bridgton is playing a support role to protect the Narrow Gauge Trail and Willett Brook aquifer, their public water supply. *The Bridgton Town Meeting occurred on June 12 while this newsletter was being printed, and it is expected that they will gift \$25,000 from their Moose Pond Trust Fund.*

Contributions are encouraged in 2013 to help complete this project. Gifts of all amounts can be sent to Loon Echo Land Trust, 8 Depot Street, Suite 4, Bridgton, Maine 04009 and note the gift is intended for the "Perley Mills Community Forest."



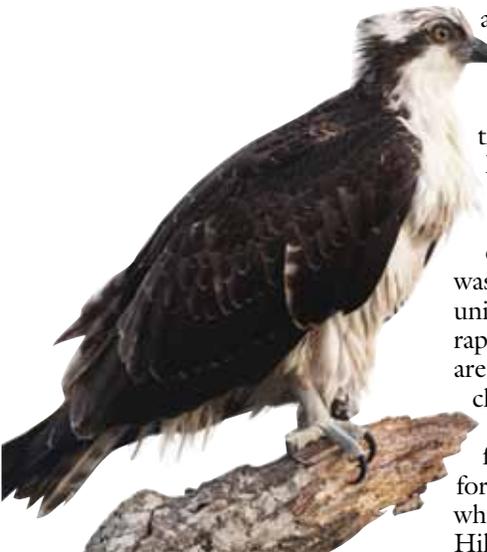
JON EVANS

High quality wetlands flourish in Perley Mills.

NOTES FROM THE TRAIL

HAVE YOU BEEN TO A LOON ECHO PRESERVE LATELY? The 22 miles of hiking trails have been newly blazed with colored aluminum markers to provide guests a more user friendly experience. The trail maps have also been colored to correspond with the blazing system. This system will help new visitors to find their way and will assist the increasing number of winter trekkers who at many times are breaking trail. Mayberry Hill, Pleasant Mountain and Bald Pate Mountain preserves are under this new method of trail marking and will be the model for future preserves.

UPON THE ARRIVAL OF Spring came an opportunity to observe a family of ospreys, *Pandion haliaetus*, nesting atop one of the cell towers at Hacker's Hills. In May two



adults and three juvenile ospreys were observed flying to and from the tower, practicing their soaring skills and having a grand time while bantering back and forth with a variety of sounds. Loon Echo was surprised to see this unique North American raptor so far inland as they are commonly sighted closer to water where they patrol shorelines looking for fish. Keep an eye out for these tremendous birds when you visit Hacker's Hill next.



BOB TRAVIS

Leave a Legacy of Conservation Join the Bob Chase Legacy Society

Loon Echo has pledged to forever care for the land that you help us conserve today. Together, we can save places that are important to you and your family. When you include Loon Echo in your estate planning, you'll keep making a difference for generations to come.

For more information about making a planned gift, call us at (207) 647-4352 or info@lelt.org.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

DAVE DYER

DAVE DYER, RESIDENT OF CASCO, MAINE, first got involved with Loon Echo upon retirement in 2011 when he saw an opportunity to get engaged with protecting the beautiful landscape he calls home. As a member of the Hacker's Hill Steering Committee Dave was an integral part of getting the capital campaign to protect the Hill underway. Just recently he agreed to be one of the gatekeepers at Hacker's Hill. Dave also serves the organization by assisting with social media efforts.



Loon Echo volunteer and Casco resident Dave Dyer.

"When I was young, trips to the Sebago Lake Region were truly adventures out into the woods. That has changed over the years as more and more land became developed. From the first time I saw the name, Loon Echo Land Trust, I realized that they are one of our best solutions to this continual loss and fragmentation of our forests. Upon retiring, they were one of the first doors that I knocked on looking for an opportunity to volunteer and become more involved in my community."

Dave and his wife Donna Murphy have one daughter, Stephanie, and a grandson Caden. Now retired from the United States Postal Service, Dave enjoys kayaking, hiking, skiing and spending time with his family at their home on Thomas Pond.

For more information on volunteering please visit www.loonecholandtrust.org.

Cycling for a Cause

THE LOON ECHO TREK IS A FALL STAPLE FOR THE LAND TRUST. It is a beautiful bicycle ride through Evan's Notch in the White Mountains, or a hike over Pleasant Mountain, and is the single largest fundraiser for Loon Echo. Everyone who participates in this annual event raves about the course, the support, friendly volunteers and overall fun atmosphere. Some choose to trek for the challenge, others choose to trek to support the organization, Ken Smith, of Raymond, Maine, chose to trek for several reasons.

In 2012 Ken raised the most pledges, over \$1500 for Loon Echo, winning the season's pass at Shawnee Peak Ski Area for his efforts. The following, in Ken's words, are the reasons why he chose to fundraise and ride the Loon Echo Trek:

"The Trek seemed like a great place for me to try my first biking trek. I found the ride extremely beautiful and a lot of fun. I will return this year with a higher mileage goal and a higher fundraising goal.

I support the mission of protecting scenic and environmentally important areas in the Sebago Lake Region. Loon Echo has done an outstanding job at this. Whether it's hiking, paddling or cross country skiing - Loon Echo has preserved some treasured locations like Bald Pate Mountain that the Smith family truly enjoys.

The work that Loon Echo accomplished to preserve access to Hacker's Hill has a very special meaning and value to me. My deceased son Zach used to visit Hacker's Hill to become closer to the nature and beauty of our region. He would frequently bring his guitar and play alone to enjoy solitude

Loon Echo would like to thank our 2013 TREK sponsors

Platinum:



Gold:



Silver:

About Time Graphics, Allagash Brewing Company, Amidon Appraisal Company, Bridgton Hospital, Camp Wigwam, Ernie's Cycle Shop, Hannaford Supermarkets, Healthsource, The Bridgton News, Yankee Amateur Radio Club.

Bronze:

Atayne, Cardinal Printing, Chalmers Insurance Agency, DLD, GrandyOats, Krainin Real Estate, and Macdonald Motors.



Ken Smith, pictured with Loon Echo Event Manager Carol Meader, getting ready to head out on his trek.

in one of the most scenic natural areas. Hacker's Hill was a very special place for Zach, and our family values Loon Echo's efforts to maintain public access to this special place."

This year the Loon Echo Trek will fall on Saturday, September 21 again starting and ending at Shawnee Peak Ski Area in Bridgton, Maine. Discounted early-bird registration ends July 1, visit www.loonechotrek.org to register.

TREK 2013

SEPTEMBER 21

SHAWNEE PEAK, BRIDGTON MAINE

BIKE

25, 50 or 100 mile ride. Toughest Century in Maine

HIKE

6 mile taste trek across the ridge of Pleasant Mountain

Hike or Bike to benefit the Loon Echo Land Trust

Register now for Maine's premier cycling and hiking event. Once again hikers and cyclists will be supported throughout their Treks with energy rich snacks and drinks and will be welcomed with a BBQ meal by Blizzards Pub, Allagash Beer, and massage provided by HealthSource upon completion of their Trek.

Visit www.loonechotrek.org for more information and to register.

SAVE THE DATE!
Don't miss out on Maine's premier bicycling and hiking event!





8 Depot St., Ste 4
Bridgton, Maine 04009
Address service requested



View from Pismire Mountain overlooking Crescent Lake in Raymond.

Agreement Signed to Protect Raymond Forest

LOON ECHO LAND TRUST IS HELPING FACILITATE THE Town of Raymond's conservation goals by securing an option agreement with Hancock Land Company on 350 acres of working forestland. The land, located on Conesca Road in North Raymond, includes gently rolling woodland extending from Crescent Lake to the top of Pismire Mountain. The agreement gives the partners the opportunity to explore the purchase of the land, which is dependent upon securing competitive grant awards and major gifts from community members.

The Raymond Conservation Commission has had their eyes on the property since developing its Open Space Plan, which was adopted in 2009. According to Chairman John Rand, "This property has many valuable assets that we mapped during our planning process including water quality and habitat protection, trail and recreation opportunities, a forest resource that can help support our economy, and a fabulous view from the top of Pismire Mountain. In sum, this is one of Raymond's Special Places that our plan sought to protect."

The property has been owned by Hancock Land Company dating back to 1943. In 2007 they prepared a report showing several residential development scenarios, and later moved forward with a 14 acre subdivision on the neighboring property that also includes 57 acres of associated open space that will be maintained by the future landowner association.

Fortunately CEO Kevin Hancock knew that the Commission had an interest in the abutting 350 acre property. The Commission closely followed the subdivision proposal and approached Hancock about alternative land conservation options.

After a prolonged slow housing market, Hancock

—
"This property has many valuable assets that we mapped... including water quality and habitat protection, trail and recreation opportunities, a forest resource that can help support our economy, and a fabulous view from the top of Pismire Mountain."
—

JOHN RAND, RAYMOND
CONSERVATION COMMISSION

approached Loon Echo to initiate a partnership between the company, land trust and town. In May of 2013 a detailed proposal was presented to the Raymond Board of Selectmen. The Board provided a vote of support for Loon Echo to enter into the agreement with Hancock to essentially buy time and the option to purchase the land. They were grateful to Hancock for agreeing to such generous terms and to Loon Echo for

its efforts. The Board viewed the project as an opportunity that they could not pass up.

The goal is to have the Town own and manage the property as a community forest for recreational, water quality and forest management uses. Loon Echo would hold a conservation easement, and local volunteers would help maintain the land according to goals identified in a management plan.

On the Town of Raymond's website (www.raymondmaine.org) there is an on-line survey for local residents to take. Opinions will help gauge the interest in this project and shape the public uses such as hunting, hiking, cross country skiing and motorized use.

The partners will know in late 2014 if adequate funds have been raised allowing for the land protection project to advance.

If you are interested in making an early pledge of support to help protect this property, please contact Carrie Walia at Loon Echo at (207) 647-4352 or info@lelt.org.